AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of communicating between a graphical component library and an appearance manager, comprising:

issuing, by the graphical component library in response to receiving a theme-independent graphical component render request from an application, a rendering service request for a graphical component, the request including at least one component defining parameter and a theme handle, the theme handle being a reference to a predetermined set of appearance characteristics stored in an internal data structure accessible to the appearance manager; and

receiving, by the appearance manager, the rendering service request for the graphical component and assigning the predetermined set of appearance characteristics to the graphical component based upon the at least one component parameters and the theme handle.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the parameters include a part ID and a state ID, and wherein the assigned appearance characteristics are based upon the part ID and state ID.

3-4. (Canceled)

5. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

issuing, by the appearance manager to the graphical component library, a message that desired appearance characteristics have changed;

issuing, by the graphical component library to the appearance manager, a request for a new theme

handle corresponding to a new predetermined set of appearance characteristics stored in the internal data

structure;

identifying, by the appearance manager directly to the graphical component library, a new theme

handle; and

issuing, by the appearance manager to the graphical component library, the requested new theme

handle, the new theme handle being a reference to the new predetermined set of appearance

characteristics; and

rendering, by the appearance manager, the theme-independent graphical component render

request in accordance with the new theme handle.

6. (Original)   The method of claim 1, wherein the requested graphical component is a control.

7. (Original)   The method of claim 6, wherein one of the parameters of the graphical

component rendering service request is a location for the control.

8. (Original)   A computer readable medium having computer executable instructions for

performing the steps recited in claim 1.

9. (Original)   A computer system having a processor, a memory and an operating environment,

the computer system operable to perform the steps recited in claim 1.

10. (Currently Amended)   A method of communicating between a graphical component library and an appearance manager, comprising:

issuing, by the graphical component library in response to receiving a theme-independent graphical component render request from an application, a request for a theme handle corresponding to a predetermined set of appearance characteristics to be used when rendering at least one graphical component;

receiving, by the appearance manager, the theme handle request;

identifying, by the appearance manager, the theme handle;

issuing, by the appearance manager directly to the graphical component library, the theme handle; and

receiving, by the graphical component library, the theme handle, the theme handle being a reference to the predetermined set of appearance characteristics stored in an internal structure; and

rendering, by the appearance manager, the theme-independent graphical component render request in accordance with the theme handle.

11. (Original)   The method of claim 10, further comprising issuing, by the graphical component library, a rendering service request for a graphical component, the request including at least one component defining parameter and wherein the theme handle is issued by the graphical component library as a component defining parameter.

12. (previously presented)   The method of claim 10, further comprising:

issuing, by the appearance manager to the graphical component library, a message that desired

appearance characteristics have changed;

issuing, by the graphical component library to the appearance characteristic manager, a request

for a second theme handle corresponding to a second predetermined set of appearance characteristics

stored in the internal structure;

identifying, by the appearance manager, a second theme handle; and

issuing, by the appearance manager to the graphical component library, the second theme handle,

the second theme handle being a reference to the second predetermined set of appearance characteristics.

13. (Original)   A computer readable medium having computer executable instructions for

performing the steps recited in claim 10.

14. (Original)   A computer system having a processor, a memory and an operating environment,

the computer system operable to perform the steps recited in claim 10.

15-42. (Canceled)